AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please add the following paragraph to page 1 of the specification, following the title (between lines 2 and 3):

Related Applications

This application is a 35 U.S.C. 371 national stage filing from International Application No. PCT/EP2003/008505 filed July 31, 2003 and to Italian Application No. MI2002A001744 filed August 2, 2002, the teachings of which are incorporated herein by reference.

Please replace the paragraph found at page 6, line 1 (paragraph [0022] of the published application) with the following paragraph:

as described in the patent EP0114984 ~~EP0144984~~.

Please replace the paragraph found at page 9, line 13 (paragraph [0043] of the published application) with the following paragraph:

in which [[R_1]] R and R_2 represent H or CH_3, and R_1 represents H or OH.

Please replace the paragraph found at page 17, lines 25-30 (paragraph [0087] of the published application) with the following paragraph:

^{1}H-NMR (500 MHz) in $CDCl_3$, some of diagnostic signals can be so assigned (values in ppm): 1.02 (--CH2-CH3, t, J=7.5 Hz, 3H), 2.82 (d, J=12Hz [[12 Hz]], 1H), 3.80 (11CH—O, m, 1H), 5.40 (4=CH, s, broad)

EXAMPLE 2 BIS

Preparation of 13-ethyl-11-hydroxy-gon-4-en-17-one (compound XIVa) from 13-ethyl-11l-hydroxy-gon-4-en-3,17-dione (compound XIIa)

Please replace the paragraph found at page 19, lines 4 – 16 (paragraph [0093] of the published application) with the following paragraph:

1.5 g (4.33 mmoles) of 13-ethyl-11-hydroxy-17,17-(1,3-propylendioxy-)-gon-4-ene (compound Xva) were dissolved in dichloromethane (60 ml) under stirring at the temperature of 10° C. 0° C. 4.5 ml of Conforth's reagent (10% CrO_3 in 9/1 pyridine/water) were added to

the so obtained solution and the stirring of the reaction mixture was continued for 15 hours at room temperature. After this period the reaction was worked-up: isopropyl alcohol was added (3.0 ml) and the stirring of the reaction admixture was continued for other 30'. The reaction admixture was then filtered on Florisil (10 g) washing the cake with 50 ml of dichloromethane. The filtered organic phases were collected and concentrated under vacuum to furnish an oil which is taken up in toluene (10 ml), the so obtained solution was evaporated under vacuum up to an oily residue and then taken up again with toluene (10 ml) and then re-evaporated to dryness: in such a way 1.04 g (3.03 mmoles) of raw intermediate XVIa were obtained.

Please replace the paragraph found at page 19, line 31 – page 20, line 4 (paragraph [0097] of the published application) with the following paragraph:
Similarly to what described in the example 4 the oxidation reaction may be performed by using 4-dimethylaminopyridinium chlorochromate as alternative to the Conforth's reagent. The reaction performed by adding the reagent to the substrate solution (711 bag of compound Xva ~~XV~~; 2.06 mmoles) in dichloromethane (10 ml) under stirring at room temperature for 40 hours led, after the usual work-up, to 390 mg (1.13 mmoles) of compound XVIa.

Please replace the paragraph found at page 22, line 6 (paragraph [0108] of the published application) with the following paragraph:
$[\alpha]_D$=+57° ~~[a]D=+57~~ (c=0.01 chloroform)

Please replace the table found at page 24, full page (paragraph [0122] of the published application) with the following paragraph:

^{13}C-NMR (125.721 MHz) in $CDCl_3$

δ^{13}C(ppm)	Attribution	Frequency	Intensity
148.2076	C-11	18638.454	2.267
140.5835	C-5	17679.647	1.945
122.0206	C-4	15345.200	4.642
109.1980	==CH_2	13732.644	4.6228
88.5589	—C≡CH [[—C^-CH]]	11137.081	2.004
81.8279	C-17	10290.601	1.472
74.7362	—C≡CH [[—C^-CH]]	9398.758	4.300
55.3591	C-9	6961.911	5.936
53.1152	C-14	6679.716	6.090
51.1012	C-13	6426.440	1.755
43.2883	C-8	5443.900	5.708
41.3149	C-12	5195.717	5.533
40.4963	C-16	5092.782	5.747
37.2807	C-10	4688.386	5.766
36.2203	C-6	4555.036	5.794
32.4107	C-7	4075.935	5.276
29.7885	c-1	3746.178	5.791
26.3767	C-2	3317.109	5.802
22.6318	C-3	2846.148	5.944
22.5902	C-15	2840.920	4.822
20.5044	CH_2—CH_3	2578.610	5.001
9.8278	CH_2—CH_3	1235.935	3.717